WRITTEN ANSWERS TO THE STARRED QUESTIONS

Upgradation of services by DOP

*245. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the burgeoning competition from private courier companies, the Department of Posts has embarked upon a major strategy to rejig its operations across the country and has worked out a four-pronged strategy to consolidate its position;

(b) if so, the main strategies formulated;

(c) to what extent it would be helpful; and

(d) whether Government are also considering to upgrade traditional services through induction of technology, introduction of new products and services to meet the challenges of faster, more reliable and more responsive services to customers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) After assessing the unfolding market challenges and emerging opportunities for postal services, the Department of Posts has adopted the following approach and strategic interventions to meet these challenges and to provide quality postal services to its customers.

(i) Technology is being inducted in postal operations on a large scale-8263 post offices have been computerized and a National Data Centre is being set up. Complaints against service are being handled through a web based system in Customer Care Centres. The Department's Eleventh Five Year Plan envisages extensive technology induction for enhanced service capability.

(ii) Expansion and upgradation of network are being taken up on a regular basis. The network is being reinforced by administrative restructuring in selected areas and streamlining of operational procedures. Franchised outlets are also being opened for enhancing access to postal services. The Department has chartered a freighter air craft for transmission of mail parcels and logistics between Kolkata and North East destinations to ensure faster and reliable service in this region thereby giving a boost to our Air Logistics operations also.

(iii) The Department of Posts is providing market oriented services like Speed Post, Business Post and Express Parcel Post. In addition, the Department has introduced new business-oriented products like Bill

Mail Service, Direct Post, Logistics Post and various e-enabled services like e-Post, e-Payment and Instant Money Order Service. Customized solutions and value additions are being provided in response to specific requirements of customers.

(iv) The Department has developed a market outlook to effectively respond to the business challenges. This encompasses aspects like pricing of products, customized solutions and value additions as part of business packages. The Department has taken initiatives to work out various business alliances and partnerships with public and private corporations for leveraging its rural postal network. The rural post office can provide a platform for various services necessary for our rural population. The Rural Postal Life Insurance has registered more than 40% annual growth during last three years.

(v) The Department has conducted extensive training-programmes on computer skills, departmental software, marketing and customer relations management for its officers and staff. The human resource development was an important area of activity and during Tenth Five Year Plan 3,93,000 employees were imparted training at different levels. In the Eleventh Plan the Department will have a larger outlay for Human Resource Development.

Accident database

*246. SHRI B.K.HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sundar Committee Report on Road Safety and Traffic Management had commented that data on road accidents injuries and mortality was both inadequate and scattered;

(b) whether the United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has come forward to fund a project to build an accident database; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) have sponsored a project titled "Implementation of the Asia Pacific Road Accident Database (APRAD) in Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries and Nepal and Development of a Computerised National Road Accident Database as a Pilot Project in India". The implementation of "Indian Road Accident Data Base (IRAD)" project has been taken up as a pilot project in India in the context of the above UNESCAP project. The project aims at evolving a comprehensive Road Accident Data Base covering the entire country *i.e.* 28 States, 7 Union Territories and 23 select cities.